

Panosteitis

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BASIC INFORMATION

Description

Panosteitis is a bone disease that affects young dogs. It is most common in large-breed, male dogs. It is also called *juvenile osteomyelitis*, *enostosis*, and *eosinophilic panosteitis*. The disease tends to affect the shafts of the bones (diaphyseal and metaphyseal regions) more than the ends (near the joints). The disease is most common in the ulna (a bone in the forearm) but can affect other long bones of the limbs, such as the humerus, femur, tibia, and radius.

Causes

The cause is unknown, although recent evidence suggests the possibility of a link between the disease and high-calorie, high-protein diets.

Clinical Signs

Lameness in one or more legs is the most common sign. The lameness can often shift from one leg to another over time. Lameness can range in severity from mild to moderate and is not associated with the time of day or any period of rest. The degree of lameness may worsen with activity and exercise. No general signs, such as depression, fever, or loss of appetite, are typically observed.

Diagnostic Tests

Deep palpation (feeling or pressing) of the shafts of the long bones usually results in a marked pain response. X-rays may be normal

in the early stages of the disease but usually demonstrate changes in the marrow cavity of the affected bones. Other diseases of growing dogs that might benefit from surgical correction (such as elbow disorders and osteochondritis dissecans) can exist simultaneously with panosteitis, so a thorough examination is advisable. The diagnosis is usually made by a combination of compatible clinical signs and x-ray findings.

TREATMENT AND FOLLOW-UP

Treatment Options

Rest and nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs specifically intended for use in dogs help alleviate the pain associated with panosteitis. The disease usually resolves with time.

Follow-up Care

The disease may develop in other long bones after signs subside in the original bone. Rarely, panosteitis can occur in young adult dogs. Notify your veterinarian if lameness fails to resolve in a few weeks or occurs in other limbs.

Prognosis

Prognosis is excellent, because the disease usually resolves on its own and secondary complications are extremely rare.